1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1938) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

241 412 section is clearly set off from the round part. The Eastern Timbira term for this implement, plčwapo, means "sharp, flat wood." In probing for tubers, especially for sweet potatoes, these farmers use a special pointed stick some 40 cm. in length, which is often derived from the end of a worn-out bow. These two are the only native agricultural implements that persist in contemporary use in Ponto.

242 Except for rice and bitter manioc, plants of one species rarely occupy one continuous major strip, the general practice being to dispose them in patches here and there or mixed with other crops.

243 177 Among Timbira cultivated plants, maize holds the place of honor, being the only one whose origin is explained by a myth. Though Ribeiro mentions only two indigenous varieties,[160] the Rąmkõ'kamekra raise four kinds of small-kerneled maize which they derive from the legendary Star maiden, Kaččkwę'i, viz. 1, põhjpéy, true or good maize, with small, white, and very soft kernels; 2, põhjyaká, white maize, somewhat larger, but otherwise similar; 3, põhjkreakáre, with small blue kernels; and 4, to'rómre, with black kernels of medium size. The large-kerneled varieties, põhjti, are additions from the Neobrazilians.

243 221 805 The appearance of the Pleiades (krot) after sunset on the western horizon is a harbinger of the rainy season and indicates the need for starting a clearing in order to plant at the first rainfall. This ushers in the meipimrą'k period (p. 84), roughly coterminous with the rainy season since it ends with the commencement of the maize harvest.

243 624 796 *Horticultural rites.*—A man named Võkrãkę', whose maternal home is on the east side of the village circle, is charged with ceremonially opening the planting as well as the harvesting of maize. On the former occasion there figures a small gourd bowl whose edge is painted with urucú and which is filled with maize kernels. Võkrãkę' takes this container to the plaza and sets it on the ground, where people dance around it. Then he takes the bowl to his wife's plot and plants the maize, whereupon others are free to follow his example. After this functionary's death his office descends to the matrilineal kinsman to whom he has transferred his name.

243 ● 782 796 When the maize stands about 1 m. high, another ceremony is held in order to induce the Moon, Pųduvrį, to ward off noxious animal parasites from the plants. Clapping together their hands and singing "Pųduvrįre kayẽ'yẽ' rivahá vaká mopó tu krére," all the villagers of both sexes then slowly dance in the plaza on a full-moon night, moving from the north southward under the leadership of a precentor wielding his rattle. In the rainy season they fear a lunar eclipse even far more than during the dry period, for they think it would destroy the crops. The relevant ceremonies will be described later.

776 782 In case of drought, however, not the Moon, but the Sun, Pųt, is addressed. Three old men then march round the boulevard, singing "kedeti/imįpéy/vayakrį' (Grandfather [= sun],/be good to me and/gladden me [by rain])."

796 624 243 No one—not even the woman owning the plot—is free to eat of the crop until the councilors have tasted of it and declared it mature. The maize harvest is opened by the same man, Võkrãkę', who inaugurated the planting season. First, a hunting party leaves to secure meat for the village. When they return with game, Võkrãkę' asks his wife to fetch from the plots a carrying basket full of maize ears, which are husked and cooked into meat pies to be served to the councilors in the plaza. Of the husks Võkrãkę' makes some twenty shuttlecocks, which his son Rąrą'k takes to the plaza and throws, one by one, into the circle of players. These throw each ball toward one another with the palm of the hand as long as possible without per-

[160] Memoria, § 11.

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

but remained standing aloof. But after the spoils had been piled up, a tamhą'k went there to select a portion for himself and his fellow members, and they then distributed it among themselves.

If the hunting party had killed a tapir, all persons within reach gathered round the carcass, and an old man selected as vigorous a young tamhą'k as could be found. The man chosen set off his occipital hair by tying in the manner explained, and painted the oral region with charcoal powder; whereupon the old man stuck a wad of cotton between the tamhą'k's lips. For evisceration the beast was laid, belly up, on palm leaves, then a knife was ground and put on the game. The tamhą'k stepped up, seized the knife, slowly made a single downward incision in the skin, cutting chest and belly, and redeposited the blade. The object of this performance was to render the tapir fat when dissected. The old man thereupon handed the animal's liver to one of the tamhą'k's relatives, who had a pie, ku'kú'ti, prepared from it, which the young men brought to the elders in the plaza.

The killer of a jaguar screamed beside the carcass until one of his hunting companions approached, took away the hunter's weapon, whether bow or gun, and gave him his own in exchange. The hunter distributed the skin among the bravest men, who used it for armlets on their upper arms.

The sun is considered the protector of game animals, which are thus commended to his care: Of a late afternoon an old man summoned the men to form a circle round him in the plaza. He stood resting on a stick, faced east, turning his back to the solar disk, and prayed: "Kédeti imą̃ prire kuna yamãke imą̃ katí vakokú rųitó a'nã ató impey!" Approximately this means: "May the Grandfather [sun] protect all beasts so they grow up and can be eaten by man." Then the suppliant successively enumerated the long series of species whose welfare he commended to the sun.

Fishing

Fishing is but slightly developed among the Timbira. Its economic insignificance has been noted by Snethlage, too.[20] Even with tribes like the Kre'pų'mkateye and the Timbira of Araparytíua, who live directly on the banks of sizable rivers, fishing plays a subordinate role. As for the steppe Timbira, the brooks near their settlements furnish only small fish in moderate quantities, so that a family could hardly ever eat its fill from the produce of a catch. Fishing was naturally eliminated for the Krîkatí, who dipped up their water supply from water holes. However, in special cases certain small species form the prescribed diet.

Fish are secured by shooting with arrows (pl. 16, *h*, *i*), with a line, and (after drugging) with a scoop net (pl. 17, *c*). Fish spears and anchored nets are lacking, as are basketry traps and the "pari" traps frequent among the Tupí tribes and also found among the Apinayé. The fish arrows are sometimes, but not as a rule, without feathers. They are generally marked by the greater length of their gynerium shafts and bear simple barbed points. Harpoon darts and arrows with several points are unknown.

Tradition does not report aboriginal fishhooks. Those now in use are of iron, mostly from North America, and are designated by the term ỹyó, derived from Portuguese *anzol*. The Indians themselves manufacture the line from tucum fiber. Angling devolves mainly on the children, women, and old men.

The Rąmkõ'kamekra poison fish with the plant now cultivated by them and called kalón by the Timbira, the timguy of the Neobrazilians, from whom the Indians borrowed it. Another fish drug, less used at present, but in my opinion

[20] Nordostbras. Ind., 160.

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

226 114 aboriginal, is the forest creeper the Timbira call ha'kró, the Neobrazilians timbó. The Indians tear it out with the roots, then wash off the earth, and tap the root on a log with an appropriate stick so as to separate the fibers. While some rinse the fiber balls in the water of the creek, others wait downstream in order to seize with their hands the stupefied fish as they drift along, or spit them on arrows, or catch the smaller fry with a scoop net, krį, this last being a conical net mounted on a hoop without a handle. My reason for regarding it as aboriginal is that, while lacking among both the Guajajára and Neobrazilians, it appears in the same form with the [174] identical designation among the Eastern (Rąmkõ'kamekra, Pųkóbye, Kre'pų'mkateye) and Western Timbira. The small fish are collected in gourd bowls or little [227] baskets, the larger ones are ranged on special cords, tepčečą, with a wooden tip at one end and a transverse stick at the other (fig. 6).

226 791 In drugging fish, too, they like to select a young tamhą'k, who is the first to enter the water when the stupefied fish begin to appear, while the other Indians wait on

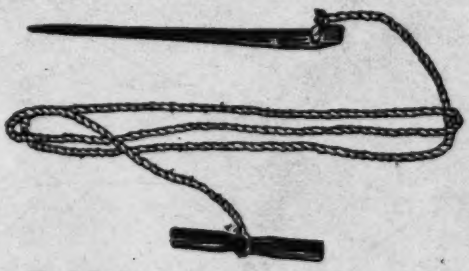

Fig. 6. Cord for stringing fish. Approx. ½ nat. size.

the bank. He spits the first three fish on his arrow, signalling for each by a shout, to which the others respond by screaming and the blowing of trumpets. Then he leaves the water and hands the fish to an old man, while everyone starts gathering the spoils.

Gathering

222 178 782 Gathering is indissolubly linked with nomadic or seminomadic life. Farmers in a restricted territory, like the present Timbira, cannot gather in the steppe with any measure of profit.

However, though this source of food has shrunk almost to the insignificance of fishing through the progress of agriculture and the restriction of the habitat, the Rąmkõ'kamekra still pray to the sun to protect the steppe fruits and let them grow to gladden men's hearts. This is done somewhat differently than in the corresponding prayer for game, though in almost identical words. The speaker was the oldest man of the entire tribe. He went to the plaza in the morning, rested one knee on the ground, stretched out an empty gourd bowl toward the sun, and said, "Kédeti imą ampó čo yamã ke imã hokati vayakrį'."

222 175 137 Before rice and manioc flour were available, when the tribal territory was about twenty times its present extent, the gathering of steppe and *galeria* fruits was perhaps proportionately greater. Ribeiro,[169] who evidently observed the Timbira with special frequency during their migratory period, enumerates the following among their wild fruits:

[169] Memoria, § 11.

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

843 As pregnancy progresses, the rules multiply: both parents are prohibited from eating the flesh of parrots, wild doves, sariemas, and armadilloes; and they must not kill a snake if they encounter one. The father must not singe a young paca at the fire lest there be a miscarriage, and he must not have sexual relations with either his wife or other women.

847 [137] Deliberate abortion seems very rare; during the whole of my stay no case came to my notice. However, I was told that occasionally women deserted by their husbands used abortives—the decoction of the scraped bark of the pau candeia tree (*Cassia* sp.) or the malodorous shoot of an undetermined species. On the other hand, unintentional abortion often results, as I was able to note in several cases, exclusively from the pregnant woman's insistence on staggering home like others of her sex under an overloaded basket of cultivated fruits, a pleasure no Indian woman lightly renounces. Although the carrying basket is suspended from a forehead band (pl. 5, *b*), the load also rests heavily on the small of the back, with the consequences noted.

DELIVERY

844 As the period of delivery approaches, the husband partitions off the platform bed with mats, for normally parturition takes place in the dwelling. Further, he plaits a number of anajá-grass mats for bedding. No male must witness the delivery. Though the husband is allowed to remain in the partitioned space—as a rule he does not avail himself of this privilege—he must not look at his wife, for that would render the birth more difficult. An elderly matrilineal kinswoman assists, there being no special midwives.

845 In difficult cases the crushed seeds of cantaloupes (post-Columbian!) are rubbed into the small of the mother's back. Another means of relief is for the husband to walk outside round the house—a usage shared with the Apinayé and the Kaingang. A young husband is often deeply affected by the event. As a primipara, Pụtyapére had an exceedingly lengthy and painful delivery. Her husband, after having walked outside around the house several times, sat fidgeting on a racing log before the door. Beside him sat two of his as yet unmarried kwụ'nõ in sheepish embarrassment. As I passed by, the expectant father hailed me and looked at me in so supplicating a fashion that I tried to soothe him as best I could.

844 The woman in attendance ligatures the navel string with a cotton cord and cuts it with an iron knife, whose aboriginal equivalent the Indians were unable to tell me about. On the cut they smear first urucú, then the juice of the araçá bark. The afterbirth, mekéti, is buried in a corner of the house. One must not throw away the anajá mats on which the delivery has taken place and which are changed as soon as soiled. The delivered woman's mother rolls them up and squeezes them into ● [782] the fork of a tree in the steppe beyond the house, at the same time praying to the sun for protection of the infant from harm: "kedti, napáre ipụm, hompú apũi kačun nãre!" The mats are left to be destroyed by the next steppe fire.

The pelvic bones are pressed together after birth by having the woman lie on her side on the platform bed, her husband seating himself on her hip.

THE NEWBORN INFANT

847 Having never seen a single case of manifest bodily defect among about three hundred Rąmkõ'kamekra, I at first suspected them of killing crippled infants at birth, but any such practice was expressly denied.

846 The woman who assists at birth cleanses the infant's mouth with her finger, washes it, and paints it with urucú; the mother is taken behind the house and

1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

837 562 554 virgins; the group further comprises all divorcées and widows who do not as soon as possible enter another fixed union. Irrespective of those who were formerly wantons and subsequently became permanently married, Ponto has twelve to fifteen members of this class. They are not regarded as outcasts nor is their mode of life condemned as vicious. They arouse public displeasure only if they lure men away from their wives, and even then the man is held solely responsible. Privately and publicly the wantons are on a footing of equality in their relations with virgins and married women; they are simply not models and have certainly failed to live up to the ideal.

It took me considerable time to determine the identity of the wantons, for their behavior is devoid of impudence or boldness, even in talking with the bachelors of the tribe. To them, too, the Timbira principle applies that a man is helpless against a woman's aversion, so that there is no question of any coercion or of a wanton's obligation to yield to a man coveting her. On the contrary, they choose their lovers and, what is more, mostly in an extraordinarily discreet manner. Usually the wanton gets her brother to ask the young man she favors to bring her a piece of some game animal or something of the sort. If he consents, he immediately suggests through the intermediary a rendezvous at a specified spot in the steppe or the woods at a certain time. Thither he takes his gift and receives his reward.

837 585 Most of the wantons soon establish so permanent a relationship with their lovers as to create the impression of ceremonially wedded wives as soon as the man sleeps in her matrilineal home. Indeed, especially after the birth of children, they come to be regarded as such. So far as I was able to observe, this is even the most frequent form of union nowadays. Only a small minority fully exercise their right to take up with any man they wish. Such happenings as Von den Steinen describes for the Bororo[m] are not possible among the Timbira.

The lovers supply their mistresses in the manner stated with gifts, especially victuals, but also with other objects. If the present is such as to be unsuitable for the girl, she will turn it over to her brother, who is usually cognizant of her amours and figures as her natural protector and counselor.

[848] A pregnant wanton names all the men with whom she has had sexual relations during pregnancy, thus enabling them all to go into seclusion in the infant's interests (p. 107).

834 837 At present not a single wanton pays the least attention to moiety exogamy. My impression is that it was these wantons who first transgressed the rule and that people came to regard union with one of these girls as the normal form of matrimony.

DESIRE FOR CHILDREN

562 842 The more children parents have, the better they like it. Since there is sex equality neither boys nor girls are preferred. In 1936 six girls happened to be born one after the other, a circumstance that attracted general attention, but no unfavorable comment.

586 842 A man would leave the wife he had married as a virgin provided she proved barren. I do not know how far this was a mere pretext, for I know two childless couples who have not the least intention of separating for that reason.

782 In order to effect conception a woman breaks the egg of some bird, preferably that of a *Tinamus* species, and rubs the yolk on her body. Others invoke the sun: Smearing urucú on the palms of their hands, they go outside the village in the morning, raise their hands toward the rising sun and pray: "kedti! iymãiykra ño,

[m] Von den Steinen, Naturvölkern, 388 f.

1: Nimuendaju I-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SCS Timbira SCS

wakukrá iykapeáne." That is, approximately: "Grandfather! Give me a child so that I may be able to eat with him." Then the suppliant spreads the urucú on the inside of her thighs.

Kentapí did not take that much trouble. One morning she was sitting at home against the wall, eating some food from a gourd bowl, while the sun was shining in at the door, directly in front of her feet. She set down her bowl, stretched out both palms horizontally toward the sun, like a begging child, and without getting up said in a low tone: "pa'pám! iymã iykra ñoñgõ! pa'pám iykaprẽ', marwa'té iykrí napá. Ka, iykaprẽne iymã iykrareñoñgõ, vamẽ iypa!" ("Our Father! Give me a child! Our Father, take pity on me, I am sitting here alone, eating. You, pity me, give me a child to eat with me!") On my request she subsequently repeated the words. "I wonder whether he will listen to your prayer?" I asked. "Surely," she answered, "look at Iromkré [Kentapí's younger sister], she also invoked him and is already pregnant." However, it was three years before Kentapí's prayer was fulfilled.

It is a striking fact that the girls of this tribe never have children before, and only several years after, marriage. This is regarded as normal by the Indians themselves, and the above-mentioned Iromkré, who conceived immediately after marriage, was considered exceptional. She was fifteen as a primipara, and her mother told me that she was really too young to bear children. Abortives, if used at all, are exceptional; nor, in my opinion, can the means employed to prevent menstruation be responsible for the lateness of pregnancy in the light of the earliness of sexual intercourse. For this purpose a girl will seat herself on a steppe tree the Neobrazilians call pau pombo (*Tapirira* sp.?) or drink the infusion of the scraped bark of pau candeia (*Cassia* sp.), which is also considered an abortive.

In any case Snethlage probably underestimates the age of mothers in setting that of Ramkõ'kamekra girls who already had a child at barely twelve;[88] or, possibly the child he had in mind was not the offspring of the girl with her. The youngest mother I saw was certainly Iromkré, whose age was between fourteen and fifteen.

OLD AGE

Old people are esteemed; a junior would not venture to address them by name as though they were of his own age, but will always apply a kinship term, calling them kedti or tu'ire (grandparent) even if there is no blood relationship. Children and young people never try to converse with their elders unsolicited; even when they have to make some communication to them, they usually remain standing before them in silence until asked to speak. In meeting old people on a narrow path, the younger ones make way to let them pass. I have never heard the frailty of old age derided or mocked. Old Krithí', though already hard of hearing and very myopic, would insist on occasionally going to the creek five to six kilometers beyond the village to try his luck as an angler. On these trips he went astray several times on the numerous trails crisscrossing the steppe and was unable to find his way home. Then his grandsons or great-nephews trotted in his wake like hunting-dogs and jubilantly led him back by the hand.

I have pointed out (p. 94) that after a period of some forty years of athletic life all men of an age class ceremonially and automatically drop out of the sports activities to enter the council, which constitutes the real governing body of the tribe since the chiefs undertake nothing without their advice. Further, I have explained by many illustrations that after any ceremonial retreat a person must present himself to this assemblage before being reckoned a full-fledged member of society again.

[88] Snethlage, Reise, 463.

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

Their public cult performances may be counted on the fingers of one hand, and several years elapsed before I discovered a private act unrelated to animism.

The Sun and Moon myth of the Eastern Timbira greatly resembles that of the Apinayé[25] and Šerénte. I heard it not only among the Rąmkõ'kamekra, but also wholly or in part among the Pụkóbye, Kre'pụ'mkateye, Krẽyé of Bacabal, and the Krahõ'. Both characters are conceived as male and as unrelated to each other. In Rąmkõ'kamekra myth they create mankind by diving in a brook, in a Pụkóbye variant, from bottle gourds in a plantation; but in none of the other six episodes of the myth do they in any way work for the benefit of humanity. Nevertheless the Rąmkõ'kamekra regard themselves as primarily dependent on the Sun (Pụt) and in much lesser degree also on the Moon (Pụduvrí).

The purpose of all the general cult performances is to invoke the heavenly bodies to protect food plants and animals. These acts comprise prayers to the Sun for rain (p. 62), for protection of game animals (p. 71), and on behalf of wild fruits (p. 72); and to the Moon to prosper the crops when maize has grown to about 3 feet in height (p. 62).

On the other hand, there was no trace of religion at the maize-planting ceremony (p. 62), nor was the hõčwá ceremony on behalf of the sweet-potato crop at all related to Sun and Moon worship, though it does bear a magical significance (p. 63).

During the entire period of my stay I witnessed only two instances of a person's supplicating the Sun. The first time a young woman was praying for a child (p. 130); the second time I heard a mother instructing her approximately seven-year-old son, who had been ill for a long time, to invoke the Sun as follows: "Kédeti! Iymą̃ ampõ'no, vatoǫkũne iypey! (Grandfather! Give me a remedy so that I'll recover!)" Further, I learnt that, when putting the mats soiled at the delivery into the fork of a steppe tree, the mother of a lying-in woman supplicates the Sun, as stated (p. 106), to protect the newborn infant.

The prayers have no fixed text, the suppliant addressing the Sun spontaneously as though conversing with an ordinary person. Thus some address him as pa'pám, Our Father; others as Kédeti, Grandfather. I have never heard of any Rąmkõ'kamekra seeing Sun or Moon in dreams or visions.

There is little knowledge of the course of the heavenly bodies. Time is reckoned by lunar phases and by seasons (rainy and dry). They do not know how many full moons there are in a year, being handicapped by their aboriginal number system, which does not go beyond four. They do not ponder the nature of the solar body. They know approximately where the sun rises and sets during the wet and the dry season, but they do not empirically determine the solstice or use it in time reckoning.

The younger age classes, regularly assembled in the plaza at sunset, always consider it fun to expect the appearance of the new moon, each youth vying with the rest to discover it first. As soon as it is detected, everybody raises his hands and utters piercing shouts "to give pleasure to the Moon."

The moon spots are explained in Rąmkõ'kamekra myth (p. 244) and somewhat differently by the Krẽyé of Bacabal.[26] No explanation was obtained for the lunar phases.

A lunar eclipse is called pụduvrị hitịk, that is, dying of the moon. In 1935 I witnessed one and went purposely to the plaza to sleep there. Since the sky was somewhat clouded, the Indians did not notice what was going on until the darkening

[25] Nimuendajú, The Apinayé, 158.
[26] Nimuendajú, Vokabular und Sagen der Crengás.